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Gov. Otter celebrates new technology at INL Honors Banquet

IDAHO FALLS — Idaho's governor and Idaho National Laboratory leaders are getting out their black ties today in the name of a shared goal — the creation of new technology.

Idaho Gov. C.L. "Butch" Otter is attending INL's 14th Annual Honors Banquet today to highlight the role of new technology in his Project 60 initiative. The commercialization of technology created in Idaho is a key part of the initiative, which strives to grow Idaho's gross domestic product to \$60 billion.

A media event preceding the banquet will recognize one such technology. A new type of gun sight developed at INL is now headed to the commercial marketplace. The technology illustrates how INL innovations are transferred to the public.

"Idaho National Laboratory actively supports Gov. Otter's Project 60 goals to grow the regional economy," said Brent Stacey, INL Technology Deployment director. "INL shares management and technological expertise with key people serving on several Idaho forums, including the Idaho Strategic Energy Alliance, Idaho Innovation Council, Idaho Technology Council and Idaho Rural Partnership. INL also advances the state's technology-based economy through partnerships with the Idaho Economic Development Association, Idaho TechConnect and other organizations."

Tonight's honors banquet will celebrate a number of INL inventors who have developed and patented new technology that can be or already has been licensed for commercialization. INL's 2009 Inventor of the Year and Technician of the Year will be named from several finalists, and seven researchers will be inducted into INL's Lifetime Achievement Hall of Fame for developing five, 10 or 15 patented technologies.

In all, more than 60 inventors will be recognized. Also, INL Laboratory Director Awards will honor exceptional scientific, engineering and lifetime achievement.

Although INL engineer David Crandall won't be recognized this year, his patent-pending gun sight technology epitomizes the type of innovation hailed at the banquet.

Crandall, a member of the U.S. Long Range Rifle Team, knows that gun sight systems are key for marksmen as they attempt to strike their targets. But current telescopic sights are heavy, fragile, expensive and sometimes require a power source.

So Crandall and his team developed a miniature optical filter that brings near and far items into simultaneous focus. Precise aiming can now be achieved without the drawbacks of conventional sighting systems. This revolutionary filter is lightweight, compact, rugged, less expensive and does not require a power source.

Apollo Optical Systems in Rochester, N.Y, which licensed the technology as the MicroSight, will now commercialize the filter and make it available to the public. The company is a world leader in design, engineering and manufacturing of custom precision optical components and systems.

"Apollo Optical Systems is extremely pleased to be collaborating with Idaho National Laboratory," said Dr. G. Michael Morris, Apollo's chief executive officer. "INL's team has an excellent working knowledge and tremendous insight into the markets for this type of product. Teaming with Apollo's intellectual property and expertise in optical design and manufacturing makes us ideal partners to bring this exciting new product line to the marketplace."

INL is one of the DOE's 10 multiprogram national laboratories. The laboratory performs work in each of DOE's strategic goal areas: energy, national security, science and environment. INL is the nation's leading center for nuclear energy research and development. Day-to-day management and operation of the laboratory is the responsibility of Battelle Energy Alliance.

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